

**From:** Andrew Williams  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/23/02 9:44am  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my vote against the proposed settlement. I won't list every complaint, since I'm trying to keep this short and I tend to ramble. I'll focus on the numerous loopholes in the settlement, specifically the proposed "limitations" on Microsoft's behavior in regards to two things: unfairly competing with other products (by integration into Windows, using secret APIs, or whatever) and the "disclosure of communications protocols necessary to interoperate with Windows"

Regarding the first, Microsoft can easily choose to "integrate" anything they like, and in theory, have no problems. I do have issues with regards to the "forced usage" that they rely on. Windows XP comes with MSN Messenger, with NO option to uninstall or disable. Why? Do I even have an internet connection at home? Shouldn't I be able to at least uninstall it? The definition of "Operating System" is very loose, and cannot be relied upon to limit their actions. Obviously, they have no intention of stopping their own "absorption" of other products.

As to the second, the "disclosure of communications protocols," the definition of "interoperate" is fairly clear. However, Microsoft could easily choose to have an "open" protocol with their "proprietary" extensions. This would be legal with the current settlement, as the "open" protocol could work. However, I would bet a year's salary that Windows would by default present the options to users to use the "proprietary" extensions, thus making them frustrated when they had to give them up to use the "open" protocol. Users don't want to "lose" features, even if they aren't needed. This is just ONE loophole, and it would result in basically no change from the status quo.

In summary, a more strict punishment MUST be applied. I am tired of others looking at me strangely because I don't have Office. I CHOOSE not to spend hundreds of dollars on an application that I only "need" because others don't know that an alternative exists. If its going to be a "standard" like that, it should come with the OS, just like IE is now "standard." Though I should mention, the numbers are inflated since users of Windows can't NOT use IE. I personally avoid it as much as possible, and it still pops up all the time. I've found Opera, for example, to be faster, more stable, and easier to use, but I have to identify myself as an IE user to load some pages, because Microsoft has made the world think that IE is the only browser. It is this kind of situation that has to stop. A superior product should never die simply because the competitor is funded by a mammoth entity with a load of cash. The proposed settlement would not fix this problem, and I don't know of a solution myself. I'm a programmer, and I only see good things being ruined by MS. I can say without reservation that this settlement

is a wrist-slap, nothing more. Don't let my money(from taxes to fund the trial) go to waste.

Thank you for your time,

Andrew Williams